

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814

**HURRICANE KATRINA INFORMATION**

October 5, 2005

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-66-05

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
REFUGEE COUNTY COORDINATORS**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☒ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☐ Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY FOR EVACUEES OF
HURRICANE KATRINA

This letter is to provide information and guidance regarding eligibility for the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) for refugees who were recently evacuated or displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina. For the purpose of this situation, the term "refugees" includes refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians from Vietnam, victims of a severe form of human trafficking who have received certification or eligibility letters from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), and specified family members of trafficking victims.

Written Declarations

Refugees eligible to receive RRP benefits and services, including those provided under the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), Refugee Employment Social Services (RESS), and Targeted Assistance (TA) programs may have been evacuated or displaced from communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina. A number of these individuals may no longer have access to documents that are typically used for the purpose of determining eligibility for the RRP. When determining RRP eligibility for these individuals, counties are to ask the applicant for a written declaration, under penalty of perjury, containing the following information:

- Applicant's Name
- Date of Birth
- Alien Registration Number ("A Number"), if available
- Current immigration status, e.g., refugee, asylee, etc.
- Most recent permanent address (where the individual resided prior to being evacuated).
- An acknowledgement that he or she has been displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina.
- Date of entry into the United States (U.S.), date granted asylum, or obtained Cuban/Haitian entrant status, or date of ORR trafficking eligibility or certification letter, as applicable.

If the declaration indicates that the applicant has an immigration status that qualifies him or her for the RRP, and the individual has been displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina, the county may conclude that the applicant is eligible for the RRP. A sample declaration is available on ORR's website at: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/sl05-24att.htm>.

Disaster Assistance Payments

Many refugees impacted by Hurricane Katrina have received various forms of disaster assistance, including cash payments. Benefits may have been provided by federal, state, and local governments, as well as numerous non-profit organizations. Counties are to disregard any forms of disaster assistance received from any source by an applicant for RRP benefits or services. Disaster relief benefits should not be considered or counted during any income and resources determination for the purpose of determining eligibility for the RRP.

Listed below is additional information that is specific to the RCA, RESS, and TA programs:

The RCA Program

Cash assistance provided to eligible refugees under the RCA program remains limited to eight months.

The RESS Program

The ORR has issued a nationwide waiver of the 60-month limitation on the provision of RESS to eligible refugees. The waiver is in effect from September 1, 2005, through September 30, 2006.

The TA Program

The ORR has granted a waiver of the 60-month limitation for the TA Program **only** for refugees who have been evacuated or displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina and have been in the United States for more than 60 months. The waiver is effective from September 1, 2005, through September 30, 2006. For refugees who are not evacuees from Hurricane Katrina, there are no changes to current TA Program policies and procedures.

Reporting Evacuee RCA, RESS, and TA Cases

The ORR has requested information on benefits and services provided to refugee evacuees to determine their affect on states' budgets and service capacity. Please provide an unduplicated case count of the following:

Page Three

- Number of refugees evacuees receiving RCA.
- Number of refugee evacuees receiving RESS Program services.
- Number of refugee evacuees receiving TA Program services.

Please e-mail information available through the week ending October 7, 2005, to the following by the close of business October 10, 2005:

Mr. Milton Yee, Manager
County Operations and Performance Unit
Refugee Programs Bureau
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, M.S. 6-646
Sacramento, CA 95814
Milton.Yee@dss.ca.gov

After submitting the initial report, please send a report indicating the number of new Hurricane Katrina evacuees at the end of each subsequent week.

For refugee families who were receiving or who may be eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program benefits, information on California's TANF Program, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Program, can be found in All County Information Notice (ACIN) NO. I-52-05 at:
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/HurricaneK_2244.htm.

To receive RRP benefits and services, applicants are not required to provide their social security numbers. The above procedures related to RRP eligibility for Hurricane Katrina evacuees are effective as of the date of this ACIN. Please be advised that refugees who have become naturalized U.S. citizens are not eligible for RRP services or benefits.

If you have any questions regarding refugee Hurricane Katrina evacuees, please contact your county analyst in the Refugee Programs Bureau at (916) 654-4356.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

CHARR LEE METSKER
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

c: CWDA